

Council of Directors of School Psychology Programs (CDSPP)
Doctoral Level Internship Guidelines
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The doctoral internship is an important culminating professional practice experience in doctoral level education and training in school psychology. Following are guidelines for school psychology doctoral internships that will provide the basis for high quality internship experiences.

Although these guidelines set forth basic quality standards for doctoral level school psychology internships, internship requirements for licensure and certification are set at the state level and vary from state to state. Therefore, graduate students and training programs should consult relevant state licensure and certification requirements when considering the nature of a specific internship.

CDSPP is an organization of doctoral level school psychology programs. It is not an official accrediting body and does not evaluate, approve, or accredit internships or training programs. CDSPP guidelines may be useful for prospective interns who are evaluating the quality of school psychology doctoral internships. These guidelines may also be useful to doctoral training programs in making program development and internship approval decisions. They may also be used by organizations authorized to approve or accredit internships or training programs. Doctoral training programs and internship sites that are interested in accreditation by the American Psychological Association should refer to the *Guidelines and Principles for Accreditation of Programs in Professional Psychology* published by the APA Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation.

In the absence of special circumstances, a doctoral internship program in School Psychology meeting these guidelines will also be considered as meeting the "Guidelines for Defining an Internship or Organized Health Service Training Program in Psychology" developed in 1980 by the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology to identify an acceptable internship, which is one of several requirements for credentialing by The National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology.*

1. A School Psychology doctoral internship is an organized training program that, in contrast to supervised experience (e.g., practica) or on-the-job training, is designed to provide the intern with a planned, programmed sequence of training experiences. The internship is the culminating supervised professional practice training experience prior to the granting of the doctoral degree. It follows a programmed sequence of coursework, practica, and field experiences and occurs after the substantial completion of the coursework leading to the degree. Its primary focus and purpose is ensuring breadth and quality of training, meeting the needs of the graduate student/intern, and providing an extension of education and supervised training from the university program. The internship consists of a range of activities including assessment, evidence-based intervention, consultation, program development and program evaluation, supervision, and research designed to meet the psychological, educational, and health needs of the clients. Interns should have experiences with prevention and development of system supports, as well as with direct intervention for client problems, and should have experiences dealing with cultural and individual diversity.

2. The intern, whether full-time or part-time, spends at least 25% of his or her time in providing direct (face-to-face) psychological services to clients, patients or consultees, such as teachers or other mental health service providers, which translates to a minimum of 375

hours out of 1500 doctoral internship hours. The intern engages in research activity which includes the evaluation of services delivered and the effectiveness of the intern's own training.

3. The internship agency provides a dated written statement, brochure, or website that describes the goals and content of the doctoral internship program, states clear expectations for the quality of trainees' work, training, and supervision, and is made available in advance to prospective interns. The internship agency, preparing institution, and intern have a written agreement that describes the goals and content of the internship including clearly stated expectations for the nature of experiences offered in the agency and for the quantity and quality of the work. Each intern is given a written statement that includes salary, benefits, reimbursable travel, holidays, and other relevant data.

4. Interns receive a formal, written evaluation minimally at the end of each university semester, trimester, or quarter course grading period. The format for that evaluation is agreed upon in advance by the internship agency and the intern's university training program. The areas evaluated are consistent with doctoral program objectives and competencies and include evaluation of intern skills in assessment, intervention, consultation, program evaluation, and ability to deal with issues of cultural and individual diversity. Communication between doctoral training programs and internship programs is of critical importance to the overall development of competent psychologists. The doctoral internship is a required part of the doctoral degree, and while the internship supervisor assesses student performance during the internship year, the doctoral program is ultimately responsible for evaluation of the student's readiness for graduation and entrance into the profession. Therefore, intern performance is discussed among the training partners: the internship site and the university.

5. Due process procedures for interns are made available to interns prior to the beginning of the training period. If due process procedures are initiated related to intern behaviors, intern activities, or internship conditions, the university-based director of the school psychology doctoral program in which the intern is enrolled is notified by the supervisor at the internship site.

6. Full-time internships are completed in no less than 10 months; part-time internships may extend to no more than 24 months. The internship includes a minimum of 1,500 hours in activities described above. Interns and university training programs should consult relevant credentialing (e.g., state licensure, certification) requirements to determine the number of internship hours required for licensure and other desired credentials. In addition, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) has established requirements for internship (e.g., completion of at least 600 hours in a school setting). For more information, consult the relevant NASP standards and credentialing documents.

7. Internship agencies and the intern's university training program jointly issue to the intern written documentation (e.g., a certificate, letter, or "Certificate of Completion") reflecting successful completion of the psychology doctoral internship.

8. The internship agency employs a clearly designated doctoral-level psychologist, who: (a) is currently licensed by the state regulatory board of psychology to practice at the independent level and (b) is responsible for the integrity and quality of the internship program. The internship agency has at least two psychologists on staff available as supervisors, at least one of whom is actively licensed as a psychologist by the state regulatory board of psychology. However, internship agencies such as school districts

that have the capacity for only one staff psychologist may meet the spirit of this criterion (breadth of training experience) by entering into consortium agreements with other agencies, such as other school districts or university doctoral programs. Such consortium agreements must ensure supervision of the intern by two or more psychologists, one of whom is actively licensed to practice at the independent level by the state regulatory board of psychology and who provides at least half of the required internship supervision.

9. The full-time internship includes **at least two hours per week of regularly scheduled individual supervision by a doctoral level psychologist licensed for practice at the independent level** with the specific intent of evaluating the psychological services rendered directly by the intern and supporting the intern in the role of psychological service provider.

10. In addition to the individual supervision (**as described in #9 above**), the intern spends **at least two additional hours per week in scheduled group or individual supervision, conducted by a doctoral level psychologist who is either licensed for practice at the independent level or certified by the state department of education to practice as a school psychologist in schools.**

11. The intern has regularly scheduled, supervised, and documented training activities with other doctoral psychology interns such as professional development/in-service training; case conferences involving a case in which an intern is actively involved; seminars dealing with professional issues; or observing delivery of health, educational, and/or child/adolescent services. These activities may be in conjunction with appropriately credentialed professionals other than school psychologists. The internship agency has two or more interns engaged in training at the same time. However, agencies having the capacity for only one intern may meet the spirit of this criterion (i.e., the socialization of doctoral-level psychology interns) by having regularly scheduled and documented training activities with psychology interns at other sites in the immediate geographic area or, when internship sites are at a significant distance from each other, by making arrangements for regularly scheduled meetings of interns for several hours on a monthly basis.

12. Internship supervision may be provided through synchronous audio and video format where the supervisor is not in the same physical facility as the intern. Supervision through electronic means may not account for more than one hour (50%) of the minimum required two weekly hours of individual supervision (as described in # 9 above), and two hours (50%) of the minimum required four total weekly hours of supervision (as described in #9 and #10 above). The use of telesupervision should be consistent with the program's overall model and philosophy of training, with assurance that relationships between supervisors and trainees are established prior to engaging in telesupervision. The rationale for the use of telesupervision with interns at a particular site, and the scheduling and means for telesupervision should be clearly articulated. As with usual forms of supervision, the supervisor will retain full professional responsibility for all clinical services provided by the intern(s). Programs utilizing any form of telesupervision have a formal policy that includes procedures to address issues of non-scheduled consultation, crisis coverage, and handling of privacy and confidentiality. These policies and procedures are established in advance and shared among the training program, the internship site, and the intern(s). Technology and quality requirements, as well as training in the use of the technology, are available for the supervisor and the intern. Internships using telesupervision adhere to best practices and ethical, legal, and professional guidelines.

13. Reports and documents prepared by the doctoral intern for consumers, other agency or school personnel, or other relevant publics are co-signed by the licensed psychologist supervisor for the intern.

14. The trainee has a title such as "intern," "resident," or other designation of trainee status.

*This statement may be included in these Guidelines pending review of the final version of the Guidelines by the Executive Officer of the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology.